



Setti D. Warren
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts
Department of Planning and Development
1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

Telephone
(617) 796-1120
Telefax
(617) 796-1142
TDD/TTY
(617) 796-1089
www.newtonma.gov

Candace Havens
Director

**MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARINGS
NEWTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

DATE: January 23, 2014

PLACE/TIME: City Hall, Room 202
7:30 p.m.

ATTENDING: David Morton, Acting-Chair Mark Armstrong, Member
Jean Fulkerson, Member Rodney Barker, Member
Donald Tellalian, Alternate Bill Roesner, Member
Nancy Grissom, Member Katy Hax Holmes, Staff
See Attendance List

ABSENT: Laura Fitzmaurice, Alternate
Ellen Klapper, Alternate
Leonard Sherman, Alternate

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. with David Morton presiding as Acting-Chair. Voting permanent members were Morton, Armstrong, Fulkerson, Barker, Roesner, and Grissom. Alternate member Tellalian also voted. Fulkerson arrived during the first agenda item presentation and abstained from voting on the first item. Barker left the meeting after the vote on 19 Maynard Road. Katy Holmes acted as recording secretary and the meeting was digitally recorded on an H2 device.

277 Elliot Street – Preservation Restriction Review

Dennis Reiske, architect for the Stone Institute, presented an application to install 11 additional parking spaces behind the existing parking lot. Reiske provided a brief background as to how the Institute came to have a PR held by the Newton Historical Commission when the property was located in the Upper Falls Local Historic District. Commission members reviewed the application, photographs, and materials information. Under the terms of the preservation restriction, changes to the landscaping around the complex required review and approval of the Commission. Reiske told the Commission that red oaks were slated for removal and that spruce and specimen trees would be planted as mitigation once the new parking lot was installed. Stockade fencing would also be installed immediately around the proposed dumpster to screen it from surrounding properties.

Abutters at 45 Islington Road, 49 Thurston Road, and 296 Lake Avenue asked for clarification on how this preservation restriction worked and what the policy was on tree replacement.

Grisson made a motion to approve the exception to the preservation restriction as presented. Armstrong seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 23, 2014 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-1-1:

RESOLVED to approve the preservation restriction as presented by Mr. Reiske to allow the Institute to remove and replace plantings as delineated on the presented drawings, and allow new asphalt for 11 cars at the designated location.

Voting in the Affirmative:
David Morton, Acting-Chair
Mark Armstrong, Member
Nancy Grissom, Member
Rodney Barker, Member
Donald Tellalian, Alternate

Voting in the Negative
Bill Roesner, Member

Abstained
Jean Fulkerson, Member

45 Murray Road – Partial Demolition Review

Peter Sachs, representing the owners who were in attendance, presented an application to request a partial demolition of the south and front east façades for construction of an addition and gabled bump-out, respectively. Commission members reviewed the application, a plan for the proposed alteration, and photographs. Staff stated that this c.1897 vernacular Queen Anne Style house was located in a neighborhood with a mix of architectural styles and construction dates from the mid-19th century through the mid-20th century. Staff reported that the first owner appeared to be John J. Bannon, an Irish immigrant who is listed in directories as a gardener and a wagon-driver, and who moved to this home in 1897. Evidence in directories suggested that the Bannon family lived in the house through the 1960s. The simple architectural form of this house at one time showed evidence of varied siding patterns in keeping with a vernacular form of the Queen Anne Style, and appeared to be one of the oldest remaining in the neighborhood. The house is in a somewhat altered condition with replacement windows on the front three sides, vinyl siding, and a front porch that appears to have been enclosed in the 20th century. A shed and pentagonal dormer were also added at later dates.

Commission members discussed the building and surrounding neighborhood context. Members stated that the building warranted a finding of preferably preserved. Barker made a motion to find the property preferably preserved. Grissom seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 23, 2014 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 7-0:

RESOLVED to find the residence at 45 Murray Road to be preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:
David Morton, Acting-Chair
Mark Armstrong, Member
Jean Fulkerson, Member
Nancy Grissom, Member
Rodney Barker, Member
Bill Roesner, Member
Donald Tellalian, Alternate

Plans for new construction as presented by Peter Sachs, architect, were discussed at length. Mr. Sachs requested to withdraw his proposed plans without prejudice, so that he and the owners could incorporate suggestions made by Commission members into a revised set of plans.

29 Wedgewood Road – Partial Demolition Review

Property owners Denise and Peter Staubach presented an application for a partial demolition to remove the existing garage and breezeway, and replace it with a larger garage and rear room.

Staff reported that this 1935 Cape Style house was built in a densely developed neighborhood of a mix of architectural styles, with a predominant construction date in the early 1920s. The house was built on a very small lot, less than 6000 square feet, by Beatrice and Robert Cassell. By 1938, Beatrice was living in the house with Paul J. Cassell, a salesman, until the 1940s. Lillian Dungan, a clerk, lived in the house from the 1950s to the 1960s. Grissom made a motion to find the property preferably preserved. Roesner seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 23, 2014 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 7-0:

RESOLVED to find the residence at 29 Wedgewood Road to be preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:

Mark Armstrong, Member
David Morton, Acting-Chair
Nancy Grissom, Member
Bill Roesner, Member
Rodney Barker, Member
Jean Fulkerson, Member
Donald Tellalian, Alternate

Ms. Staubach presented two plan scenarios for the proposed garage addition, and told the Commission that they planned to keep the same roofline, windows, and siding as existing in both scenarios. Due to lot size restrictions, the owners told the Commission they were forced to install a new garage that was set slightly forward of the existing front facade. Commission members expressed their concern that the addition looked too big for the house, but ultimately decided that the second set of plans, which showed a front-facing gable with a single dormer containing paired windows, was the preferable option. Barker made a motion to approve the second set of plans as presented. Armstrong seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 23, 2014 the Newton Historical Commission, by a vote of 6-1-0:

RESOLVED to approve the second set of plans as presented (front-facing gable with a single dormer containing paired windows).

Voting in the Affirmative:

David Morton, Acting-Chair
Mark Armstrong, Member
Jean Fulkerson, Member
Nancy Grissom, Member
Rodney Barker, Member

Voting in the Negative:

Bill Roesner, Member

Donald Tellalian, Alternate

3 Auburn Street – Demolition Review

Rick Sewall, developer and owner of this property presented an application to demolish the residence. Staff reported that this Federal Style house is in deteriorated condition, and stands within 150 feet of the Myrtle Baptist Neighborhood National Register Historic District. Built c.1880 but possibly earlier, the house stands at the back of the lot facing Auburn Street, and was once the site of a livery stable. Two easements also line the property on either side. In 1907, the house was set back on the lot in its current configuration, with a large outbuilding to the west of the house, and was owned by James H. Nickerson, a Newton resident who appears on census information as a men's clothier in 1880, though he did not yet own this property. In 1895, the house was set closer to Auburn and was owned by Martha Porter, a servant, with a small outbuilding at the near west side, suggesting the house was moved c.1900.

Sewall stated that the existing building had been altered and was in a deteriorated condition. Commission members discussed the building and surrounding neighborhood context. A Commission member stated that the building was a sweet antique, and that its loss would be detrimental to the neighborhood. Mr. Sewall showed photos he had taken of the interior of the structure as evidence of its condition. A Commission member asked whether the house could be renovated. Roesner made a motion to find the house preferably preserved. The motion was seconded by Fulkerson.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 23, 2014 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 4-3,

RESOLVED to find the residence at 3 Auburn Street preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:

Mark Armstrong, Member
Jean Fulkerson, Member
Bill Roesner, Member
Rodney Barker, Member

Voting in the Negative:

David Morton, Acting-Chair
Nancy Grissom, Member
Donald Tellalian, Alternate

Mr. Sewall then presented documentation that he claimed refuted staff's finding that the house was historically significant. Mr. Sewall told the Commission he had evidence to suggest that the house was not built until the 1920s, and that the only reason this property was sent to the Commission was the fact that it stood within 150 feet of the Myrtle Baptist National Register district boundary. Mr. Sewall requested that the Commission accept his appeal to the staff finding of historical significance of this property. Grissom made a motion to accept the appeal as requested. Barker seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 23, 2014 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 7-0,

RESOLVED to accept an appeal of the finding of historical significance of 3 Auburn Street as presented.

Voting in the Affirmative:

David Morton, Acting-Chair
Mark Armstrong, Member
Jean Fulkerson, Member
Nancy Grissom, Member
Bill Roesner, Member
Donald Tellalian, Alternate

Rodney Barker, Member

19 Maynard Road – Waiver

At its regularly scheduled meeting on September 26, 2013, this Commission voted that this property was preferably preserved. The developer and owner returned this month to apply for a four-month waiver of the demolition delay. Commission members reviewed the application, plans for the new construction, and photographs. Staff stated that this 1953 Ranch style residence was located in a West Newton neighborhood of similar Ranch buildings. The first owners were John and Ethel Farrington. John worked as an engineer. The architect for the building was Ralph I Williams and the building was constructed by Campanelli Homes, a development company founded in 1947 which is responsible for most of the Ranch development in this neighborhood. The building appeared to have had few alterations aside from replacement windows. The roof also had some deterioration as well. The surrounding neighborhood had a strong Ranch architectural context. Though some buildings were replaced and others altered, the overall character of the neighborhood remained. The neighborhood was surveyed as part of a post –WW II historic architecture study in Newton which included the housing development on Maynard Street. In the past few years the Historical Commission reviewed the demolition of 10 Maynard Street and 42 Maynard Street, and neither building had a demolition delay imposed.

Commission members had concerns about the height of the proposed building and its lack of historic context with similar houses in this post-World War II housing development. A Commission member said she thought 1.5 stories was preferable to a 2.5 story replacement dwelling. Another Commission member stated that columns on either side of the front door, and Palladian windows, were also not in keeping with the architectural context of residences in the neighborhood. The houses in the neighborhood were simple, he continued, and that bringing the house down to 1.5 stories with a simplified driveway would be preferable. Grissom made a motion to approve the waiver for the demo delay on this property. Tellalian seconded the motion.

At a regularly scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 23, 2014 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 3-4:

RESOLVED to waive the demolition delay on 19 Maynard Road.

Voting in the Affirmative:

David Morton, Acting-Chair
Nancy Grissom, Member
Donald Tellalian, Alternate

Voting in the Negative

Bill Roesner, Member
Mark Armstrong, Member
Rodney Barker, Member
Jean Fulkerson, Member

Due to the lack of a majority, this motion failed to pass.

7 Fredette Street – Demolition Review

Vadim Kagan, owner of this property, presented his plans to demolish the structure. Staff reported that this 1948 Ranch style residence was designed with others as post-war housing by the Joseph F. Kelly Corporation, and was located within Oak Hill Park. The house was vacant in 1949, but by 1955 was owned by Richard Kibugh, who does not appear in directories. In 1959, it was Ely Adelman, a grocer. Staff reported that the building had few exterior alterations aside from replacement windows. The surrounding neighborhood context consisted of Oak Hill Park residences largely in original condition, altered Oak Hill Park residences with substantial additions (including adjacent to this property), and some new construction. Grissom made a motion to find the house not preferably preserved. Tellalian seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 23, 2014 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 6-0:

RESOLVED to find the residence at 7 Fredette Street not preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:

David Morton, Acting-Chair

Bill Roesner, Member

Jean Fulkerson, Member

Mark Armstrong, Member

Nancy Grissom, Member

Donald Tellalian, Alternate

40 Beaconwood Road – Demolition Review

Owners of this house reported that the house had been in the family since 1978, and that the house needed significant rehabilitation, which was not considered to be feasible, and were instead proposing to demolish the house. Isabelle Albeck of 240 Windsor Road (not an abutter) proposed that the charm of the street remain as it was and that the Commission should consider finding the house preferably preserved. Staff reported that the house was built in 1949 as a two-family, one-story hipped roof, semi-detached ranch in keeping with others located along this street in a post-war Ranch Style development designed by Norman I. Paterson and James Harold Woods, Jr. Operating as a company under the name Beaconwood Trust, these one-story duplexes were designed as rental units, unusual for post-war housing in Newton at the time. Two other identical duplexes are located across the street, but other units have been demolished and replaced with single family houses further down the block. This neighborhood was surveyed as a post-war historic district in 2003. Grissom made a motion to find the property not preferably preserved. Armstrong seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 23, 2014 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-1:

RESOLVED to find the residence at 40 Beaconwood Road to be not preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:

David Morton, Acting-Chair

Mark Armstrong, Member

Nancy Grissom, Member

Donald Tellalian, Alternate

Jean Fulkerson, Member

Voting in the Negative

Bill Roesner, Member

36 Parsons Street – Demolition Review

The owner of this building, Arto Demovsesian, presented his plans to demolish the existing Italianate Style house to build a new home for his family. He told the Commission he did not want to preserve the house, and wanted to add a garage to create a more modern home. He said he was told by his builder that to renovate the house would cost more than replacing it. The owner said he purchased the house in December in a neighborhood where there were lots of other two-family houses in the immediate neighborhood. Staff reported that this c.1880 Italianate Style house was located in a neighborhood of early 20th century residences, and that the neighborhood had architectural examples from the late 19th century and mid-20th century including Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Cape, and Dutch Colonial. The collection of buildings was notable for an example of the transition of architectural styles within an

approximately 50 year time period from the end of the Victorian era to the mid-20th century, and was largely intact. Edmund Wiswall, a milk dealer in Newton, owned this house and other rental properties on the same street in the early 1900s. The house retained its massing, Italianate style brackets, hipped roof (though this may have been altered over time), and dormers were added later. In 1931 the house was occupied by George Stimson and his wife Maria. Maria was still living there in 1943. Commission members noted that the building retained original details and massing. Armstrong made a motion to find the house preferably preserved. Fulkerson seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 23, 2014 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 6-0:

RESOLVED to find the residence at 36 Parsons Street preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:

David Morton, Acting-Chair

Bill Roesner, Member

Jean Fulkerson, Member

Mark Armstrong, Member

Nancy Grissom, Member

Donald Tellalian, Alternate

111 Webster Park – Demolition Review

Owner of this property, Rick Sewall, and his architect presented plans to tear down the National Register-listed house at this address. Sewall stated that he believed the rear addition on this house was constructed in the 1980s. He also told the Commission the house had serious structural issues and that it was sagging and slanting, and in his opinion had lost its historic context.

Steve Schaeffer, an abutter at 157-155 Webster Street, said that after moving back to his hometown of Newton recently he had seen houses drop all around him, and that he would hate to see this house disappear on the park. He told the Commission he thought it could be beautifully restored. Staff reported that this house was one of eight identical Gothic Revival cottages located within a few blocks of each other in West Newton, four of which were located in a National Register-listed historic district. A Boston & Worcester Railroad employee named Robinson was believed to be one of the early owners of this house. This property was included in this district. Webster Park was one of the earliest ‘pocket parks’ in Newton surveyed by Alexander Wadsworth, a Boston resident who made his name locally in the 1840s for this form of suburban development in Newton and for his contributions to the layout of Mount Auburn Cemetery. Pocket pockets have a characteristic landscaped island, often oval, surrounded by single-family homes. Kenrick, Waban and Walnut Parks were other local examples of Wadsworth’s work. Staff also reported that Gothic Revival style buildings were somewhat rare in Newton, and in 2010 one was landmarked by the NHC at 17 Channing Road. Carol McPhearson of Margaret Street in Newton Highlands, told the Commission about tax incentives for saving historic buildings. Peter Fannucci of Auburndale also encouraged restoration of this structure. Grissom made a motion to find the building preferably preserved. Fulkerson seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 23, 2014 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 6-0:

RESOLVED to find the national Register-listed residence at 111 Webster Park preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:

David Morton, Acting-Chair
Bill Roesner, Member
Jean Fulkerson, Member
Mark Armstrong, Member
Nancy Grissom, Member
Donald Tellalian, Alternate

34 Thurston Road – Demolition Review

The owner of this house, Marianne Marks, did not attend the meeting and had no representative present. Commission members reviewed the photos that were provided with the application and the staff review. Staff reported that this c.1910 Colonial Revival house stands close to the road on a high outcropping of land supported by a tall concrete retaining wall. Though the windows have been replaced, the house appears to retain most of its historic detail including siding, roof and massing. Buildings on either side of this house are modern, with two or more units of housing in each. Houses of similar period are located across the street with minimal alterations. A search of building permits issued for this building over time show only utility upgrades. This house was built on land owned by Isabella W. Spence, an immigrant from Scotland. By 1929, John M. Spence, a watchmaker and her son, owned a house at this location. Different occupants lived in the house in the ensuing years. Grissom made a motion to find the building preferably preserved. Tellalian seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 23, 2014 the Newton Historical Commission, by a vote of 6-0:

RESOLVED to find the residence at 34 Thurston Road preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:

David Morton, Acting-Chair
Bill Roesner, Member
Jean Fulkerson, Member
Mark Armstrong, Member
Nancy Grissom, Member
Donald Tellalian, Alternate

283 Melrose Street – Partial Demolition Review

Steve Vona, developer for this property, presented his plan to partially demolish this structure. Vona presented his plan to remove the north side stairwell addition and a south-side roof dormer, as well as his future plans to restore the three steeply pitched gables that originally spanned the south roof line. Vona also told the Commission that his plan was to preserve the theatre and that he wanted to construct an addition on the north side of the building. Mr. Vona did not present plans for approval at this time. Commission members reviewed the photos that were provided with the application and the staff review. Staff reported that this c.1850 Rustic Cottage style house, later used as a social club and most recently a theatre, served most recently as the Turtle Lane Playhouse in Auburndale Center. The house was originally constructed by Abijah S. Johnson, one of the earliest developers of Auburndale, whose deeply pitched gables on the north side were reminiscent of the Rustic Cottage Style. These gables were later removed, as well as most other architectural detail from this period. The house now appears to be more Colonial Revival in style.

Mr. Wong, an abutter at 20 Duffield Road stated for the record that the whole plan for this site was not yet presented. He also asked that given this site's location across the street from the National Register-listed library, its context should be considered. Ms. Cassavant of 27 Ash Street said she was extremely

concerned about this plan, and that the developer was knocking on doors to look for sellers in order to expand his lot. An abutter at 267 Melrose Street asked whether Mr. Vona owned the property and if he had a purchase and sale agreement. Mr. Vona said that he has a contract on the property and can sign legally as the owner. A property owner at 240 Windsor asked whether ownership was required in order to appear before the Commission. Mr. Vona answered that it was, and he was the owner.

Polly Bryson, a former Newton alderman, gave a brief history of the building to the assembled and told the Commission that people in the neighborhood would feel a lot better if they knew what was planned for this site. Mr. Vona answered that this was the start of a very lengthy approvals process and that everyone would have a chance to see the project and comment. Grissom made a motion to find the building preferably preserved. Roesner seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 23, 2014 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 6-0:

RESOLVED to find the building at 283 Melrose Street preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:

David Morton, Acting-Chair
Bill Roesner, Member
Jean Fulkerson, Member
Mark Armstrong, Member
Nancy Grissom, Member
Donald Tellalian, Alternate

143 Wiswall Road – Demolition Review

Mike Stuchins, the primary contact person for the owner, Anna Sudman, briefly presented the family's plan to demolish the house and detached garage. Staff reported that this 1948 Ranch style residence designed with others as post-war housing by the Joseph F. Kelly Corporation, is located within Oak Hill Park. In 1949 the house was owned by Charles R. Gallagher, a salesman, and his wife Eleanor. In 1955, the owners were Harry and Anna E. Sudman. Harry was listed as a clerk. The Sudmans lived here until at least 1985. Harry died in Newton in 1994. It appears that the building has had few exterior alterations aside from replacement windows. The surrounding neighborhood context consists of Oak Hill Park residences largely in original condition, altered Oak Hill Park residences with substantial additions (including adjacent to this property), and some new construction. Grissom made a motion to find the house not preferably preserved. Armstrong seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 23, 2014 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 5-1:

RESOLVED to find the building at 143 Wiswall Road to be not preferably preserved.

Voting in the Affirmative:

David Morton, Acting-Chair
Jean Fulkerson, Member
Mark Armstrong, Member
Nancy Grissom, Member
Donald Tellalian, Alternate

Voting in the Negative

Bill Roesner, Member

50 Stearns Street – Waiver

Aurel Garban, representing the owner, presented partial demolition plans in response to a demo delay having been placed on the house at the December 17, 2013 NHC meeting. Commission members reviewed the new plans, which proposed a rear two-story addition and an attached side garage. Staff had previously reported that this 1911 Colonial Revival / Craftsman style residence was located in a neighborhood of early 20th century residences. The collection of historic buildings in the neighborhood was notable for showing the transition of architectural styles within an approximately 50-year time period from the end of the Victorian era to the mid-20th century. This building was built by Benjamin Adey, a Newton builder, and originally owned by Charles Stearns (a milkman) and his wife Mary. Ownership changed quickly with the property owned by Robert Hubbard in 1913, who worked in the loan industry in Boston, and then Allen Kawel, a manager, in Boston in 1915. Like other residents in this neighborhood the owners were often commuters who worked in Boston. The building retains its windows, rafter tails, and shingle siding, with the screening-in of the front porch being the most notable alteration. The building contributes to the early-20th century architecture on the street.

At the December meeting, Garban stated that he was open to the idea of keeping the building and constructing an addition. The building was voted by the Commission to be preferably preserved at the December meeting. Grissom made a motion to waive the demo delay on this property. Fulkerson seconded the motion.

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on January 23, 2014 the Newton Historical Commission, by vote of 6-0:

RESOLVED to waive the demo delay at 50 Stearns Street based on plans as presented but with further review of construction documents by Dave Morton, Chair.

Voting in the Affirmative:

David Morton, Acting-Chair

Bill Roesner, Member

Jean Fulkerson, Member

Mark Armstrong, Member

Nancy Grissom, Member

Donald Tellalian, Alternate

Administrative Discussion:

Minutes

The November 2013 meeting minutes were not presented for approval at this meeting.

Meeting adjourned 11:40 PM